ECONOMICS

GEOGRAPHIC and ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES.

131 Rumania has an area of 204,967 square kilometers, approximately larger than that of Italy, and owing to its circular form has proportionately to its surface a very short stretch of frontiers, only 2,669 Km.—which are mainly formed by natural features. It is situated between the 43-rd and 49-th degrees north latitude and 20° and 31° east longitude. The highlands of the Maramureş separate Rumania from Czechoslovakia, but there is no clearly defined frontier between Rumania and Poland. The river Dniester constitutes the frontier with Russia for a distance of some 700 Km. To the east Rumania is bounded by the Black Sea for a distance of 277 miles. It is separated from Bulgaria partly by an artificial frontier across the Dobrudja, and partly by the Danube for a distance of about 450 Km. The latter river also provides a partial boundary with Yugoslavia to the south, while to the west the frontier separating Rumania from Yugoslavia and Hungary is drawn through the plain of the river Theiss at about a distance of 30-40 Km. to the east of the latter. The country is divided into the following provinces :—

133 635 *Wallachia*, which is sub-divided by the river Olt into the district of Oltenia to the west and Muntenia to the east, the latter being separated from Moldavia by the river Sereth and its affluent, the Milkov. Oltenia is composed of a wide belt of hilly country bordered by the Danubian plain to the south, which, narrow at its western end, gradually broadens out to the east into the plain of the Baragan, considered to be the granary of Rumania and extending from the river Ialomitsa to the S reth. Wallachia is watered by numerous rivers, which with the exception of the Olt, the source of which is in Transylvania, all rise in the southern Carpathians and flow into the Danube, the largest of them being the Jiu, Argesh, and Ialomitsa.

The Rumanian bank of the Danube, owing to its extreme flatness, is subject to inundations and forms a fringe of marshes and swamps extending along the whole length of the river to a width of some 20 Km. in some places. The

imposing range of the Southern Carpathians, otherwise known as the Transylvanian Alps, shuts off Wallachia on the north from Transylvania, the main means of communication between the two provinces being provided by the Vulcan, Red Tower, Predeal, and Buzau defiles.

Moldavia is divided in almost two halves by the river Sereth which rises in Bucovina and flows southwards until it joins the Danube, receiving in its onward course several tributaries, the most important of which are the Moldova, Suceava, Bistritsa, and Trotush, the valleys of which furnish means of access to Transylvania. Western Moldavia is a hilly region very similar in structure to the Transylvanian basin, while the region between the rivers Sereth and Pruth forms a country of vast rolling plains.

Bessarabia is separated from Moldavia by the river Pruth and is delimitated to the north-east by the river Dniester, which constitutes its frontier with Russia. It is a country of vast, sparsely wooded plains, and is renowned for its orchards and extensive vineyards. The southern portion has a steppe-like appearance, though intersected by numerous lakes. It is deficient both in wood and in spring water, and for a long time this deficiency proved an obstacle to its colonization. Bessarabia originally constituted part of Moldavia, with which it also forms a geographic unit. Its capital, Chişinau, or Kichineff, is a well-built city. It possesses numerous colleges, religious institutes and governmental buildings, which form the relics of the former Russian administration and evoke memories of its past magnificence. Owing to the stoppage of traffic with Odessa, complete stagnation prevails. The Rumanian authorities have avoided the construction of communications in Bessarabia, and Chişinau, though being the second largest town in the kingdom, with a population of 117,016, is practically isolated, for the existing railways laid out by the Russians to suit different requirements, are from the commercial point of view now utterly unpractical for actual necessities. As a result stagnation has set in, and this maintains among the population a regret for the past Russian régime.

The Dobrudja lies to the south of the Danube, and may be regarded as an extension, both geographically and ethnologi-

133 cally, of the Bulgarian plateau that projects northward to
635 the Danube delta. The northern part is covered by hills, gradually sloping southwards towards the vast wooded but waterless stretches of the Dely-Orman, part of which still lies in Bulgaria.

The Banat and the Crishana form parts of the Hungarian plain and possess the same climatic and agricultural features as the latter. The eastern part of the Banat is mountainous, forming geologically an extension of Transylvania and of the western spurs of the southern Carpathians, while the Crishana is separated from Transylvania on the east by the mountainous mass of the Bihor mountains, reaching to an altitude of 1,800 meters.

Transylvania forms a circular tableland whose mean altitude is from 350 to 600 meters, and forms the essential nucleus of Rumania, both geographically and ethnically. It is encircled to the north, east, and south by the Carpathians, which occasionally reach to an altitude of 2,000 meters in the north and 2,544 meters in the southern section. Owing to an [132] average annual rainfall of about 35 inches, numerous streams take their rise and drain the region, breaching the mountain rim and thus forming the main ways of egress. The Somesh, Muresh, and Timish, the former two affluents of the Theiss, the latter of the Danube, connect Transylvania with the Hungarian plain and with the Banat, while to the south the river Olt flows through the Red Tower pass to join the Danube and offers the main and easiest way of access into Rumania. The whole region consists of an undulating upland cut up by ranges of hills into valleys, some of which are fairly extensive and fertile, owing to the frequency of [31] alluvial deposits. The mountains are thickly wooded, about a third of the total area (32.19%) being under forest, and give rise to numerous streams, the presence of which explains the abundance of pasture land and meadows and accounts for the thriving live-stock rearing industry which forms the main source of the wealth of the province. The highlands of the Maramureş, to the north, form part of Transylvania, and are separated from it by the river Somesh.

Bucovina forms a geographic unit with Moldavia and used to form part of that principality prior to its occupation by the

Austrians in 1775. Bucovina, in spite of its exiguousness in arable land—about one fourth of its surface being devoted to a variety of agricultural crops and orchards—is one of the most advanced agricultural regions of Rumania, maintaining in certain parts of the valleys of the Pruth and Sereth as dense a population as 300 inhabitants per square kilometre. Its forests are better preserved than those of the other provinces of the kingdom, thanks to the careful sylvan administration the Austrians had initiated. They cover 43% of the region and form the main source from which timber is obtained in Rumania, the river Sereth being used largely for floating down the logs to the Danubian port of Galatz, whence they are exported. When the Austrians annexed Bucovina in 1775 its population was only 72,000. Thanks to their excellent administration and their efforts to develop the country, its population had surpassed 800,000 when it was reunited to Rumania; the increase was due partly, however, to the Austrian attempt at denationalizing the country by settling Ruthenian immigrants. Cernauţi, better known as Czernowitz, is a modern town, beautifully planned and with all the amenities of a western city. The spirit of its inhabitants is distinctly occidental and reminds one of the mentality of Vienna, the more so, since they have distinct leanings towards Socialism owing to the preponderance of German culture. The town used to be an important centre of traffic between Galicia and Russia, but owing to the loss of its hinterland it seems as though struck with a sudden blight while in full prosperity. It has a population of 111,147, and constitutes the third largest town of Rumania.

Table showing population and area of provinces according to census of 1930.

	Population.	Area (sq. km.)
Wallachia	5,542,467	76,583.
Moldavia	2,413,123	38,058.
Bessarabia	2,865,506	44,422.
Bucovina	845,903	10,442.
Dobrudja	811,332	23,262.
Transylvania	3,217,149	
Maramureş and Crishana	1,387,675	102,200.
Banat	942,072	
Total population	18,025,237	Area .. 294,967.

[The Banat]

The north-western part of the province is 133
the continuation of the Hungarian plain and is very [135]
fertile. To the east and south there are high mountains with rich forests and iron and coal deposits. The mountains of the Banat are forced by the Danube in the area between Bazias and Orsova, cutting a deep narrow valley which, in the Kazan Pass, is only about a hundred yards wide. This is where the Roman emperor Trajan built the second of his bridges over the Lower Danube. This is also one of the most picturesque regions of the Banat and the whole of Rumania.

The Banat has been a strategic and economic 175
outpost of various States and empires. Throughout 635
the times of known history this province was a favourite region for colonization. Romans, Turks, Hungarians and Austrians sought to strengthen the frontiers of their dominions by settling the Banat with peoples on whose loyalty, military and economic abilities they could rely in case of war. In consequence peoples of all races were transplanted to and took root in the Banat. In Roman times the province was fortified in order to protect the settlers who were brought here from all over the empire against the Dacians of Transylvania. During the many Turkish wars the Banat was an important defensive position upon which the Hungarians based their strategy. For over a century and a half, from 1552 to 1718, the Banat was under Turkish rule and went through a period of decay.

Under the Austrian military administration, which lasted up to 1779, the Banat experienced great prosperity. German settlers from the Rhineland and French-speaking peasants from Lorraine were brought to the Banat by the Empress Maria

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[The Banat]

175 Theresa; in order to strengthen the non-Magyar
635 element the settlement of Serbs and Rumanians was also encouraged. Under the governorship of Count Mercy, a friend of the statesman and warrior Prince Eugene of Savoy, the communications of the Banat were greatly improved. Land was brought under cultivation, mining and other industries were developed and commerce given a new impetus. The chief purpose of this policy was the creation of a strong military outpost of the Austrian Empire. The military frontier region was put under a special administration. All men living in this region were exempt from taxes and dues, were given land of their own but had to perform military duties. In 1779 the Banat, with the exception of the frontier region, was incorporated into Hungary. But after the defeat of the Hungarian Revolution in 1849 the province was again administered by the Austrians and eventually returned to Hungary in 1860. After the Great War the eastern half of the Banat became Rumanian, the western part Yugoslav.

162 About 55% of the population are Rumanians. There is a German colony 225,000 strong. These 'Swabians of the Banat', including descendants of French-speaking Lorrainers who up to half a century ago had preserved all their national characteristics but have now become absorbed by their German neighbours, constitute a very strong economic and national force. They are prosperous farmers, craftsmen and industrial workers. The Hungarians, who form more than 10% of the population, have, up to a few years ago, been in the majority in most towns. There are in the Banat many Jews, Serbs and Bulgarians and also a number of Slovaks.

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[Maramures]

[Transylvania]

361 about 20,000 people, lies on the upper reaches of the Tisza; it is the centre from which beautifully hand-woven carpets are exported.

175 635 **TRANSYLVANIA** (Ardeal[R], Erdely[H], Siebenbuergen[G]). The citadel of Transylvania, guarded by the high walls of the Carpathians and overlooking the lowlands of the Danube, dominated the map of Greater Rumania during the interval between the two World Wars. The union of Transylvania was the fulfilment of an aspiration which Rumanians had for long wished to realize. But the incorporation of this principality into Greater Rumania brought with it a number of difficult problems which even to-day are far from being solved.

When the Magyars invaded Dacia in the tenth century there was already, according to the Rumanian contention, a substantial Rumanian population in Transylvania which was subjugated by them. Subsequent colonization with Hungarian and German settlers weakened the position of the Rumanians and led many of them to emigrate into the lowlands, south and east of the Carpathians. Transylvania became an autonomous principality within Hungary and was able to maintain its semi-independence even when the Turks advanced to the gates of Vienna. Many Transylvanian princes played a leading part in the long struggle against the Turks, notably those of the Bethlen family. Transylvania under its native Hungarian rulers succeeded in maintaining itself for a long time against both the Austrians and the Turks. But while the consequences of the struggle for independence invariably had to be borne by the majority of the population, economic and

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[Transylvania]

political benefits were reaped only by the privileged 175
'nations'—the Hungarian nobles, the Szekelys and 635
the 'Saxons'.

The majority of the Transylvanian Hungarians did not belong to the three ruling 'nations', but, as the nobles depended on their support, they were naturally better off than the Rumanians who were regarded and treated as serfs. The Szekelys, originally free peasants, lost many of their liberties. With the progress of feudal development their position deteriorated steadily and their customs and way of life became similar to those of the mass of non-privileged Hungarians. The 'Saxons', German settlers brought to Transylvania by the Hungarian kings to strengthen the military position of the province, were the third of the ruling 'nations'; they were able to maintain their privileges up to about a hundred years ago. While they often opposed the encroachments upon their rights by the Magyars, the Saxons nevertheless were united with their opponents when it was necessary to prevent the Rumanian majority from obtaining even the most elementary political rights.

From 1526 to 1699 Transylvania was under Turkish suzerainty, but in the latter year, by the Peace of Karlowitz, it was restored to Hungary. From that time until 1848 Transylvania was part of the Hungarian Kingdom. From 1849 till 1860 the principality was administered as one of the lands of the Austrian Crown, but was eventually reunited to Hungary in 1867. By the secret Treaty of 17 August 1917 the Rumanian Government was promised Transylvania and the land as far west as the Tisza by the Allied Powers, as the price of entering the

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[Transylvania]

175 war on their side. In December 1918, after the
635 collapse of the Dual Monarchy, an assembly of delegates of the Transylvanian Rumanians, meeting in Alba Julia, voted for union with the Rumanian Kingdom, and the province was occupied by Rumanian troops. The incorporation of Transylvania was later recognized and endorsed in the Peace Treaties.

563 *Rumanians.* The Rumanians of Transylvania, who form approximately 60% of the principality's population, are in many respects more advanced than their countrymen in Moldavia and Wallachia. The intensive State policy of Magyarization pursued by Budapest in the nineteenth century led to the strengthening of Rumanian national consciousness. The struggle for economic and political rights, however, never led to anything more than the granting of concessions on paper. From the Rumanian point of view the aims of the Transylvanian Rumanians were fulfilled only with the union of their country with the rest of Rumania in 1918. But, even under the Rumanian regime, the Rumanians of Transylvania were unable to gain economically in twenty years what they were prevented from obtaining during several centuries. Most of them were peasants; some were industrial workers; some became civil servants.

Magyars and Szekelys. The 500,000 Szekelys, inhabiting the eastern part of Transylvania, have still preserved some characteristics which make them distinct from the Hungarians, but politically and economically their position is now very similar to that of the Hungarian population which, in

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[Transylvania]

[The Bukovina]

361 peoples of Transylvania. Farther south, on the banks of the Mures, lies Alba Julia, with an old castle, a majestic Gothic church and a chapel in which King Ferdinand was crowned. Sibiu (Hermannstadt[G], Nagyszeben[H]), with a population of 46,000, half of which is German, is an ancient centre of the Transylvanian 'Saxons'. The town is entirely German in character and all the buildings, especially the churches and the market-place, are reminiscent of a little provincial borough in the Middle Ages. Two other places of historical interest are Heltau (Cisnadie[R]) and Michelsberg (Cisnadoara[R]), small German villages with peasant-fortresses built in the thirteenth century. The road to the east, along the foot of the South Carpathian wall, leads to Brasov (Brasso[H], Kronstadt[G]), the most important industrial and economic centre of Transylvania. Although the town has a population of only 60,000, there are numerous factories producing iron and steel, machine-tools, armaments, railway equipment, textiles, and other goods.

175 635 THE BUKOVINA (Buchenland[G]). The Bukovina forms the northernmost tip of Greater Rumania. This province of dense forests, gentle hills and fertile pastures has had a long and varied history. In Roman times it was part of Dacia and was subsequently overrun by many barbarian tribes. Soon after the establishment of Moldavia, the Bukovina was conquered by the rulers of that principality and annexed by them. For some time both Moldavia and the Bukovina were governed from the Bukovinian town of Suceava. In the following centuries the Bukovina was first under Polish, then Turkish

[The Bukovina]

rule. It was occupied by the Russians in 1769. In 1774 the province was given to Austria, under which it remained until 1918. On 23 October the Austrian governor handed over the Bukovina to the Ukrainian inhabitants of the province; but four days later an assembly of Rumanian Bukovinians declared for the union of the province with Rumania and asked the Rumanian government for military assistance. This was forthcoming on 11 November and added to Rumania a territory of about 4,100 square miles with a population of about 870,000 (1930). Of these over 38% were Ukrainians, 34% Rumanians and 21% Germans and German-speaking Jews. The Rumanian administration began by a vigorous policy of Rumanization. The Ukrainians, who under Austrian rule had been well treated, and the Jews, were the chief sufferers, but the Germans, too, were ousted from many of their positions.[1]

More than half of the Bukovina is covered with dense forests of beech;[2] one-fifth consists of pastures; less than a third is arable land. The province borders in the west on the Carpathians, in the south on Moldavia, in the east on Moldavia and Bessarabia and in the north on Poland. The western part of the Bukovina is formed by the slopes of the Carpathians, where manganese and iron ore are found, especially in the region of Jacobeni. To the east stretches the hilly country, covered with pastures, on which good livestock is raised, and fields of maize, wheat and tobacco. Mineral resources are confined to some small deposits of coal, gold and lead, but the industry of the province is well developed.

[1] The German University of Czernowitz was completely Rumanized soon after the military occupation.

[2] The German name of the province means 'Land of the Beeches'.

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[Bessarabia]

by the valleys through which flow the tributaries of the Pruth and Dniester. In the south, beginning near Besarabeasca, extends the Budjak steppe which merges into the sandy soils, salt marshes and lagoons of the delta of the Danube and of the Black Sea coast. The climate of Bessarabia is the same as that of the regions east of the Dniester. The summers are very hot and dry, the winters very cold with icy winds and great snowfalls. Nevertheless, crops grow well in Bessarabia and 61% of the whole area is arable land. The chief products are maize, wheat, tobacco and wine and lately also soya beans. There are few factories and the only source of income for the people, apart from agriculture, is the fishing industry in the south.

The capital of Bessarabia is Kishineff (Chisinau[R]) with a population of over 200,000 (1935). Here are concentrated such industrial enterprises as the province possesses, the most important being flour mills, leather factories and other secondary industries connected with agriculture.

The first colonization of Bessarabia was carried out by the Romans who succeeded in occupying this territory only for a short time. During the great period of migration (seventh to tenth centuries), the province was invaded by a host of tribes. Bessarabia was first occupied by Rumanians in the early fourteenth century and incorporated in Moldavia in 1367. A century and a half later Southern Bessarabia fell to Turkey, but several merchant-colonies were still administered by Genoese and Venetian traders on the Danube delta and the Black Sea coast. In the following centuries Bessarabia was often a battleground for Russian and Turkish armies, who alter-

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[Bessarabia]

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nated in occupying the province. In 1812 Tsarist Russia annexed the whole of Bessarabia. Three provinces in the south of Bessarabia were returned to Moldavia, which was still under Turkish suzerainty, in 1856; but they were again taken by Russia in 1878 and Rumania received the Dobrudja by way of compensation.

In 1917, after the October Revolution in Russia, an assembly of Bessarabians declared the province to be an autonomous part of the Federation of Socialist Republics and adopted the name of 'Moldavian Democratic Republic'. The Representative Council, however, composed of Rumanian and anti-Bolshevik delegates, frightened by the spread of revolution, appealed to the Rumanian Government for military assistance to deal with revolutionary groups in Bessarabia. This help was forthcoming on condition that the province would eventually join Rumania. As an initial step the 'Independent Moldavian Republic' was proclaimed on 24 January 1918. On 5 March General Averescu declared that the Rumanian troops would be withdrawn within two months. In the meantime his government was conducting peace negotiations with the Central Powers, which had occupied part of the Ukraine and were eager to stem the revolutionary tide. They intimated that they would favour the addition of Bessarabia to the Rumanian Kingdom as compensation for its losses to Austria-Hungary.[1]

[1] Part of Wallachia was to be ceded to the Dual Monarchy. The Treaty of Bucarest (May 1918) also provided for the demobilization of the Rumanian Army, except two divisions needed for the occupation of Bessarabia.

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[Bessarabia]

On 8 April 1918 the Representative Council of Bessarabia,[1] *Sfatul Tari*, by 86 votes to 3, 36 delegates abstaining, decided to become an autonomous part of Rumania. This step was sanctioned by Germany when the Treaty of Bucarest was signed one month later. In November of the same year, 1918, after the Armistice, it was decided at a session of the Representative Council, attended by only 46 delegates, to declare for the unconditional union of Bessarabia with Rumania. The annexation of Bessarabia was not recognized by the Peace Conference at Paris; and although recognition was promised by the Conference of Ambassadors in 1920, this undertaking was never ratified by all the Powers.

During the following years Bessarabia was treated as a conquered province. All district councils and other organs of local government were abolished. The country was ruled by prefects appointed by and responsible to the central government in Bucarest. The province was strongly garrisoned and lived in a continuous state of siege. All communications over the Dniester were destroyed and anybody caught attempting to cross the frontier was either imprisoned or shot. Between 1918 and 1924 there were a hundred and thirty-five uprisings in Bessarabia, which were suppressed by the military with the utmost violence. In the course of these revolts it is estimated that over thirty thousand Bessarabians were killed, many more executed or sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The peasant revolt of 1924 in the region around the town of Tatar-Bunar was put down after heavy fighting and the burning of many villages.

[1] The Council was composed of 138 deputies of whom 103 were Rumanian, 13 Ukrainian, 7 Russian, 6 Jewish, 5 Bulgarian, 1 Pole and 1 Armenian.

[Bessarabia]

000 down after heavy fighting and the burning of many villages.

●635 563 [452] The political situation in Bessarabia was partly the cause and partly the effect of economic conditions. Agricultural credit for those peasants who had received land was non-existent. Communications were neglected and allowed to fall into complete decay. There was only a small amount of trade, which was largely in the hands of the Jews. This encouraged the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda which was fostered by the Government. The Ukrainian and Russian population was deprived of all cultural rights. The German minority was the best treated, but even the Rumanians of Bessarabia were regarded by the central government with suspicion.

635 648 Following a demand by the Soviet government, which had never recognized the annexation of Bessarabia, Bessarabia was ceded by Rumania to the U.S.S.R. in June 1940. When Rumania joined Germany in the attack on the Soviet Union in 1941 Bessarabia and the Northern Bukovina were again occupied by Rumanian troops.

[i.e: the frequency of popular uprisings -- Analyst]